



FIGHTER
MANAGEMENT
PASS PROGRAM
(FMPP)

Sofia, Bulgaria

INDEX



I Administration Section

Useful Numbers

Local Laws

Rules for Visitors on FMPP in Sofia

II Hotel Information

Hotel Rodina

Rooms

Fees and Charges

Food and Beverages

Hotel Imposed Rules and Restrictions

Winter Ski Option

III Good to Know

Bulgarian Currency

ATMs

Credit Cards

Exchanging Money

Travelers Checks and Money Orders

IV City Information

Brief History of the City

City Structure

Transportation Around Sofia

Taxi Service

V Sightseeing/Shopping

Sightseeing Opportunities/Tours

VI Dining and Entertainment

Suggested Restaurants, Clubs,

Theaters, Cafes, Opera

VIII Helpful Bulgarian Words and Phrases

I understand that while on pass I am a representative of the United States of America and my conduct will reflect on the USA and the Armed Forces. If I commit a criminal offense while on pass, I know that I am subject to prosecution and punishment under the UCMJ and Bulgarian Law. If I get into any emergency situations, I will call one of the following numbers:

Emergency Phone Numbers:	
FMPP TOC	0035929516017
Bulgarian Police	166
Bulgarian Fire Department	160
Bulgarian Ambulance	150
Hotel Rodina Front Desk	0035929179999

LOCAL LAWS

- FMPP participants are subject to Bulgarian laws.
- All FMPP participants will surrender their KFOR ID's at check-in and must carry their SOFA cards with them at all times (Notify the FMPP NCOIC immediately of all lost military ID cards.)
- Prostitution is illegal. Do not purchase or use illegal drugs or steroids.
- Exchanging money on the streets is not advised.

RULES FOR FMPP IN BULGARIA

- FMPP participants must check in every night at the hotel TOC between 2200 hours and 0500 hours. If you are staying in the hotel for the remainder of the night, you may check in at 2000 hours.
- FMPP is a military program under military control. Body piercing rules apply. Tongue rings will not be worn by anyone. Male soldiers are not authorized to wear earrings while on pass in Bulgaria.
- Dress, conduct, and mannerism must not attract attention.
- No spitting in public places. It is considered disrespectful and insulting.
- Do not buy knives, swords or guns.



- Use the buddy system. It is strongly suggested that you always travel with a companion or in a group.
- Tattoos are prohibited for both males and females.
- Avoid high risk areas at night and avoid dark streets and alleys. Think UCMJ. DO NOT go to off limits establishments (which are listed at FMPP TOC).
- Avoid public demonstrations. Don't be curious.
- You are restricted from renting vehicles or taking public transit (e.g. buses, trolleys, trains). Tours are okay.
- If you think you are being followed, do not stop or take other actions that could lead to confrontation. Seek police assistance as soon as possible.
- Don't flash money around when making purchases and don't leave wallets or purses on countertops.
- Carry small bills. Place them in separate pockets, rather than keeping all of your money in one place. Only carry what you need for the day. Keep cab and phone money on you for emergencies.
- Do not give money to beggars.
- Don't assume that women dressed in what appears to be provocative clothing are prostitutes. Some European fashions are particularly suggestive. Show all women common courtesy and respect.
- If you encounter individuals who seem too interested in your mission in Kosovo, let the FMPP NCOIC or MP's know immediately.
- Remember that you are a representative of the forces that are deployed to support an important peace-keeping mission. Bear in mind that certain information about your unit and the mission may be considered classified and should be treated as such. Remember OPSEC!

Have a safe and fun time in Bulgaria!



Photo of upgraded room

HOTEL RODINA

The Rodina Hotel is the tallest four-star hotel in Sofia and it is situated just 15 minutes by foot to the administrative and trade center of the capital. It is only 12 kilometers from the international airport.

The hotel has 465 rooms, supplied with phones, TV, and a mini-fridge, stocked daily.

There are four restaurants in the hotel: The Danube, The Congress, the Panorama, which offers a stunning view of the city, and the Winter Garden. The hotel offers a variety of tasty national and European meals. There is also a lobby bar, a cafe and pastry shop, a 24-hour bar, "Lednika", and a night club with entertainment.

Guests can use a fitness hall, an indoor swimming pool, sauna, solarium, darts and table tennis. Massage is offered at a nominal fee.

The hotel offers a money exchange center, phone center, beauty parlor and internet service for a small fee. There is also a gift shop in the lobby.

ROOMS/FEES

Upon arrival at the hotel, soldiers will be briefed by the FMPP NCOIC and then check into rooms. FMPP participants are offered a choice of rooms – floors 4, 5, and 6 are reserved for KFOR soldiers (and their guests) only and are conveniently located near the FMPP TOC and interpreters. Single or double rooms are available at a very competitive cost.

Participants may also stay on upgraded floor 16 or suite floor 19 for an additional cost – about 35 percent more per night. These rooms are air-conditioned for comfort.

KFOR floors are monitored by security cameras 24 hours a day for the safety and security of all participants.

All rooms have maid service provided.

Participants will pay for their rooms upon checking-in. It is recommended that soldiers pay in cash - with credit cards, a surcharge may be incurred and the transaction will be subject to daily exchange rate. At check out, they will pay any additional charges, including long-distance phone, mini-bar, and any room damages.

FOOD/BEVERAGES

There are a variety of restaurants and bars in the Hotel Rodina. Room service is also available 24-hours a day.

A full continental breakfast with eggs made to order is available from 0600 to 1000 hours daily, and is included in your room rate.

Upgraded rooms have a mini-fridge, stocked daily with snacks and beverages.

Participants may drink alcoholic beverages in their rooms, in the restaurants, in the main lobby, and in the city's restaurants. Please do not linger in the hotel hallways with alcoholic beverages.

HOTEL IMPOSED RULES AND RESTRICTIONS

The Hotel Rodina and Bulgarian law prohibit prostitution. If you have a legitimate guest in your room, check them in at the front desk. You will be charged for a double room.

Do not drink alcohol near the pool. You must wear appropriate swimming clothes – no street clothes allowed in the pool. Please do not drink and swim.

OPTIONAL WINTER SKI TRIP

During the winter months, the Hotel Rodina offers a skiing option during the weekdays of FMPP.

The Hotel Rodina has 2 hotels in the Bulgarian mountains near a European ski resort. These resort hotels are approximately 100 miles from Sophia and offer excellent skiing, top of the line ski rentals, instruction, and European ski ambiance settled in a small village.



FMPP participants who would like to participate in the ski option should sign up for a weekday FMPP and travel to Sophia with the rest of the group. They will be briefed and check into the Rodina Hotel in Sophia for the first night and depart the following morning for the ski resort. Accommodations are

clean and close to the village.

Ski option participants will ski two days with one night's lodging at the resort and return to Sophia for the final evening where they will join up with the FMPP group and return Kosovo the following day.

This is a great experience for any skiers who would like to try skiing in Europe. The village is also known for

the natural medicinal spring water and spa which have been frequented by many



Olympic training teams and other sports enthusiasts.



BULGARIAN CURRENCY

Bulgarians use a currency called *Leva*. One *Lev* is made up of 100 coins called *Stotinki*.

Leva looks very similar to the *Euro*, so be careful to separate the two types of bills.

The *Lev* is now tied to the *Euro* at a fixed rate of $1 \text{ Euro} = 1.95583 \text{ Leva}$. The average exchange rate is about two *Leva* to one American Dollar (as of 2003).

AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATM)

The Automatic Teller Machine in the Hotel Rodina is safe and offers a good exchange rate. All transactions occur in Dollars. It is not wise to use other ATM's in the city, as they may be used to scam customers out of money.

It is crucial that you remember that you are a walking target for theft after leaving a money machine or exchange office. Put your money away while still facing the machine or the office. The less thieves see, the better.

CREDIT CARDS

Paying by credit card is not the routine experience that it is in the USA. Credit cards are accepted at all major hotels and some shops and restaurants. However, you will be subject to the exchange rate of the day. Also, many locations do NOT have an electronic card reader, so store staff may have the

opportunity to write down your card number. Participants are discouraged from using credit cards to pay for rooms and charges at the Hotel Rodina.

EXCHANGING MONEY

The exchange office at the Hotel Rodina is always the best choice to exchange money. With a passport, you can also get a good rate at the Bank of Bulgaria.

At smaller exchange offices, you may subject to scams, commissions, and very poor exchange rates. It is recommended that you not exchange money at these offices. It is illegal to exchange money on the street – this is an easy way to be cheated and arrested.

Sofia has no check cashing facilities/capabilities.

Your checkbook is absolutely worthless here – don't bring it. Get your cash advance at the KFOR finance office before you visit.

TRAVELLERS CHECKS & MONEY ORDERS

The Bulgarian Main Post Office and the American Express Office will cash travelers checks and conduct transactions pertaining to money orders, moneygrams and eurocheques.





BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CITY

Sofia became the capital of Bulgaria as recently as 1879, usurping the position from Veliko Turnovo after 600 years. Sofia was felt to possess a strategic location and the change of capital marked the end of Bulgaria's dark ages under Ottoman rule.

When it became capital, Sofia was a muddy, underdeveloped town of just 12,000 inhabitants, something akin to a large, open-air market. Historians talk of how the city's inhabitants attended the first royal ball dressed in woolen socks and baggy Turkish pants. The city's historic buildings date from the turn of the century up until the 1930's, when there was a rush to bring the city up to date and turn it into a modern European capital. Evidence has been found that Sofia was inhabited as early as 7000 years ago. Thracian and Roman remains can still be seen dotted around the city: in the underpass in front of the presidency, behind the Military Club, and behind the Sheraton hotel. Sofia's thermal spring meant that it was always an attractive place for settlement. There are springs in the city center, Gorna Banya, Bankya, Knyazhevo and Ovcha Kupel. Under Thracian, and later, Roman rule, Sofia was known as Serdika; from the middle of the 6th century the Byzantines renamed it Triaditsa and from the 9th Century onwards during the First Bulgarian Kingdom it took on the Slavonic name of Sredets. The city finally became known as Sofia from the beginning of the 15th century taking on the name Sofia (Wisdom), from St. Sofia church. Sofia's

coat of arms was designed in 1900. The city's motto "Raste no ne stare" (grows but does not age) was added a year later. During World War II, Sofia was badly bombed by allied air raids in the early months of 1944. Over 3000 buildings were totally destroyed and another 9000 damaged. In 1945, the Communist Party took power and proclaimed Bulgaria a "People's Republic."

The oppressive Communist rule lasted until November 1989 when, following the lead of the other East European states, Bulgaria peacefully ousted the Party leader and declared itself as a democratic republic.

CITY STRUCTURE

The Hotel Rodina, at 8 Totleben Blvd., is on the west side of downtown Sofia and is situated about 15 minutes walk from most major restaurants and points of interest. It is the tallest building in Sofia, so it is easy to find if you become disoriented. Take this guide with you so you have a map with you at all times.

THE FMPP TOC (Room 525 of the Hotel Rodina) has a map with boundary lines posted outside of it. Do not leave the boundary lines by foot. A few exceptions are listed in this guide, to which you may travel by Taxi.

TRANSPORTATION AROUND SOFIA

Participants may travel within the boundary lines by foot. It is recommended that you travel in a group or with a buddy, **ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT**. You may not take public transit (trolley, bus, train,) or rent a car at any time. You may take a taxi at any time, and this is the recommended method of travel at night.

TAXI SERVICE

Taxis are available 24-hours a day at the Hotel Rodina. Tell the doorman you need a taxi, and he will summon one for you and tell the driver where you need to go (if he doesn't speak English.) Negotiate your fare before you begin. If you feel like you have been cheated on a fare, demand a receipt and explain your situation to the FMPP NCOIC.

Fares are charged by trip, not by person. Make

sure the meter is running.

Don't ask taxi drivers for recommendations about where to go for "lots of fun". You will probably end up in a place you don't want to be that will cost you a fortune to get out of (scam joints) or that are illegal and dangerous.

OK Taxi is an approved company and very reasonably priced. In an *OK Taxi*, you should be able to travel anywhere inside the boundary lines for under 5 leva.

Some FMPP participants will hire a taxi for a day or night. The taxi driver will often act as a tour guide and interpreter, and will wait for you at every stop. A reasonable price is about 60 leva for a day or night, or about 200-300 for an entire FMPP visit. Ask the hotel staff or FMPP staff to recommend one to you – they often carry business cards of "friends" to the hotel.

SIGHTSEEING/SHOPPING



SIGHTSEEING OPPORTUNITIES/TOURS

There are a variety of day trips available to participants. Generally, a group of at least four soldiers is needed, and payment must be made on check-in day. Talk to the FMPP NCOIC to make arrangements for the following tours. Others may be available at a later date.

1. **Plovdiv and Bachcovo Monastery:** Following breakfast at the hotel, participants will leave for a one

day tour to Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second largest city, and Bachkovo Monastery, approximately 140 km south-east of Sofia. Plovdiv has preserved unique treasures from



its 24 centuries long history and has a museum to visit. Ample time is provided for shopping in Plovdiv. Bachkovo Monastery is one of the oldest monasteries in the Bulgarian lands. Founded in 1083, Bachkovo is chiefly known for its original architecture, rich collections of old icons, jewelry, coins and church plate. Lunch is provided.

2. **Rila Monastery**: Founded in the 10th century, Rila Monastery is considered the most famous monument of Bulgarian architecture and culture. The monastery is located 120 km south of Sofia. The monastery's most treasured historic and artistic monuments include: the 14th century Hrelyo's Tower; the five-domed Birth of the Blessed Virgin church; and the original 19th century monastery's kitchen. Participants will have lunch at a local restaurant and have time to shop at a local market.

3. **Koprivshitsa**: One of the most charming small Bulgarian towns, still preserving the atmosphere of the national Revival period, huddled in the mountain folds 111 km east of Sofia. The town is a unique combination of the legendary history and fascinating present. The silvery river, quiet forests, spacious meadows, bracing air, cobble-paved peaceful streets, magic stone and wood have a universal charm of their own. No other Bulgarian museum town boasts such a large number of houses and monuments – 388 in all, most of which have been restored to their original appearance. A unique

collection of ethnographic treasures, old weapons, National Revival works of art, national costumes and typical Bulgarian jewelry has also been preserved.

4. **Veliko Turnovo:** For 800 years now, V. Turnovo has towered over the Yantra river meandering at its feet. Time has not washed away the historical biography of the city in which 22 tsars in succession bore the scepter of authority. The typical architecture is enhanced by the landscape. Stately buildings with bay windows and garrets are dug into the rocky hills and small yards can be glimpsed behind low stone walls. A church crowns the top of the hill and contains interesting modern frescoes. The tour includes a walk through the city and lunch at a traditional *mexana*, Bulgarian style restaurant.

MUSEUMS/CHURCHES

Sofia offers many museums and churches for all interests.

Archaeological Museum: Gold and silver treasures, coins, pre-historical monuments.

2 Saborna St., across from the Presidential Palace.

Hours: 1000-1800, Closed Sunday and Monday.
Admission Price: 3 Leva

Alexander Nevski Cathedral Crypt (National Art Gallery)

Orthodox church art icons, 4th-19th century

Alexander Nevski Square

Hours: 1000-1800, Closed Tuesday.

Admission Price: 3 Leva

National Art Gallery: Bulgarian art, 19th-20th century

1 Batenburg Square

Hours: 1030-1800, Closed Sunday and Monday.

Admission Price: 3 Leva

National Ethnographic Museum: Bulgarian folklore, costumes, crafts.

Great place to buy traditional Bulgarian souvenirs.

1 Battenberg Square

Hours: 1000-1730, Closed Monday.

Admission Price: 3 Leva

National Military History Museum: Weapons, uniforms, medals for bravery, personal belongings of Levski and Battenberg.

92 Cherkovna St.

Hours: 1000-1700. Admission Price: FREE

National History Museum: Preserved animals, live reptile and amphibian exhibit.

1 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.

Hours: 1000-1700. Admission Price: 2 Leva

Earth and Man Museum: Minerals, giant crystals, semi precious stones

4 Cherni Vruh Blvd.

Hours: 1000-1800. Admission Price: .80 Sto.

National Polytechnic Museum: History of technology in Bulgaria

66 opulchenska St.

Hours: 0900-1700, Closed on weekends.

Admission Price: 5 Leva

National Gallery of Foreign Art: Van Dyke, Rodin, Picasso, Goya, and many temporary traveling exhibits.

19 February St.

Hours: 1100-1800, Closed Tuesday.

Admission Price: 1.50 Leva, FREE on Sundays.



The Alexander Nevsky Cathedral: This is the place to which most tourists make a beeline. It is easily recognized by its huge golden domes. The cathedral was built in honour of the Russian Tsar

Alexander 2nd, whose army liberated Bulgaria from Turkish rule. The foundation stone was laid in 1882 but the building was not completed until 1912. In *Alexander Nevsky Square*.

St. Nedelya Church: This church squats on a plot dividing two of Sofia's busiest streets, *Vitosha Blvd. and Maria Luiza Blvd.* St. Nedelya was built in the period 1856-1863 upon remains of the Roman town of Serdica. In 1925 it was almost demolished by political sabotage, but was later reconstructed.

The Rotunda of St. George: The red brick rotunda church of St. George is considered to be the oldest building in Sofia. It is situated *behind the Sheraton Hotel*, amid remains of the ancient town of Serdica. Three layers of frescoes have been discovered, the earliest dating back to the 10th century.

St. Sofia



Church: St. Sofia is the oldest Eastern Orthodox Christian church in Sofia. Many legends surround its history, but it was actually built during the reign of the Byzantine

Emperor Justinian between 527-565 A.D. In the 14th century the church gave its name to the city. 2 *Paris St., in Alexander Nevsky Square.*

The St. Petka Samardzhiiska Church: This medieval church nestles peacefully in the *subway in front of TzUM shopping center* and can be seen rising out amidst the traffic-filled boulevards that pass by it. It was built in the 14th century and houses frescoes from three different periods.

The St. Nikolai Russian Church: Built in 1912 by Russian workmen, this church *on the corner of Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd. And Benkovski St.* preserves the style of Moscow arts, painting and architecture.

The Banya Bashi Mosque: This is a typical monument of Homan architecture, which adds colour to Sofia city center. It was built in 1576. *On Maria Luiza Blvd.*

The Sofia Synagogue: The Synagogue, which was designed by the architect Grunanger in 1910 has been refurbished both inside and out, and now is a sight not to be missed. It was opened for worship in 1909. It houses the biggest chandelier in the Balkans. *On Ekzarh Yosif and Washington St.*

OTHER NOTABLE BUILDINGS

The Statue of Sofia: A 24-meter high monument was erected *in city center* in Jan., 2001. It took the place of Lenin's monument which stood there in totalitarian times. The statue weights four tons and is moulded out of bronze and forged copper. She holds symbols of wisdom and fame in her hands, and bears the crown of Tjuhe, the Goddess of Fate. It is named "Sofia".



The Party House: Occupying the intersection of *two of the city's main boulevards with the central square*, this was the seat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party until August 1990.

JUST FOR FUN

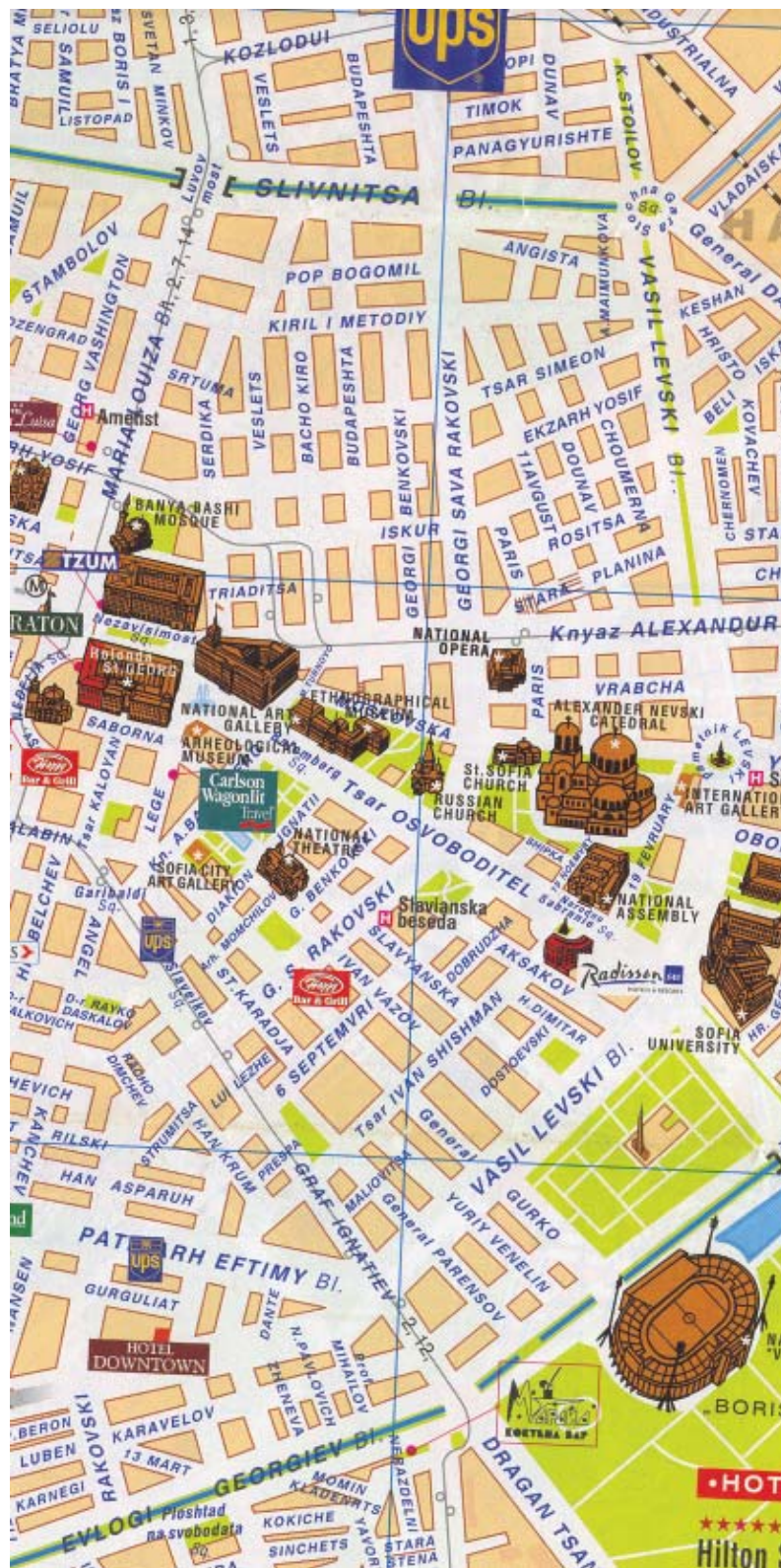
Some FMPP participants like to just relax and enjoy their pass. Here are some opportunities for daytime fun.

Krasna Poliana Karting Track: *3a Vardar St.*

Don your helmets and start your engines! For 30 minutes, soldiers can zip around a hard track speedy little go-carts. A favorite with the soldiers!

Admission: 35 Leva





Bowling: Participants may enjoy a taste of home at the Galaxy Bowling Alley, complete with a full bar. Hours: 1100-2400. *1 Bulgaria Blvd.*

SHOPPING

There are plenty of shopping opportunities for all tastes and budgets in Sofia - especially for those who would like to purchase clothes, shoes and iconic art or souvenirs.

THE UNDERGROUND MALL: *At the end of Skobelev Blvd., beneath the huge National Palace of Culture* are many, many shops selling everything from souvenirs, to clothes, shoes, music, electronics and cosmetics. There are also movie theatres and cafes.

ILIANCI (THE BLACK MARKET): A favorite with soldiers, because the shopping is plentiful and VERY cheap. It is outside of the walking boundary, but soldiers may travel here by taxi.

TZUM: is an abbreviated version of the Bulgarian 'Tzentralen Universalen Magazin', which literally translated means 'central universal shop'. This is the original name of Sofia's department store, which three years ago underwent major renovation to become the mall it is today. Like most malls it does offer the opportunity to find a bit of everything under one roof with clean toilet facilities and a stylish cafe on the first floor. On the ground floor is a newsstand



selling foreign language newspapers and periodicals. There are also several souvenir stalls selling typical Bulgarian souvenirs.

PIROTSKA ST.

Just across from TZUM, Pirotska St. is the only pedestrian shopping street in Sofia, and for that reason alone it is worth a visit. 'Halite' the former food market at the beginning of this street also has a variety of small shops on the upper level, in addition to the predominantly food orientated stalls on the ground floor.

PATRIARCH EFTIMII BLVD./VASSIL LEVSKI BLVD.

Although these are not particularly attractive shopping streets they do have a couple of shops that are worth noting.

Traditzia: *38 Vasil Levski Blvd.*

Housed in the former visa section adjacent to the British Residence, this charity gallery offers a selection of hand made gifts that are made by local artisans or children and adults in social institutions. For many the proceeds from the sale of their items, not only gives them much needed additional income but also a sense of dignity and pride. Among the items on sale you will find ceramics, woven bags, rag

dolls, embroidery, wooden puzzles, greeting cards and lots more. Run by volunteers from the international community, you'll be sure to find someone who speaks your language.

Women's Clothing Sizes					
BG	44	46	48	50	52
GB	10	12	14	16	18
EU	38	40	42	44	46
USA	8	10	12	14	16

Men's Suit Sizes					
BG	48	50	52	54	56
GB	34	36	38	40	42
EU	44	46	48	51	54
USA	34	36	38	40	42

Men's shirt collar sizes are in cm

ALEXANDER NEVSKY SQUARE: Come rain or shine, the area in front of the church hosts a flea market aimed directly at tourists. Here you will find

everything from antique cameras, coins and medals to hand knitted socks and Russian lacquered dolls and boxes. Well worth a browse, but remember haggling is essential (don't show too much interest and watch the price drop!) The pedestrianized part of 6th September St. is an exposition area for Bulgarian artists. Here you can find everything from icon copies to watercolors and lithographs as well as psychadelic oils and leather and bark creations. Something for everyone!

Just down the street, you will find older ladies with their linen stalls where you will easily be overwhelmed by the choice of hand crafted tablecloths and mats. Some stalls also offer hand knitted cotton and silk jumpers and cardigans at very reasonable prices.

Traditional Crafts Souvenir Shop: 4 Parish St. (near Alexander Nevski Cathedral) This recently opened souvenir shop is very close to Nevski Cathedral, but you need to know it's there! Here you will find a rich selection of gifts covering Bulgaria's traditional crafts; everything from Troyan pottery to hand embroidered blouses and filigree jewelry. Particularly charming are the hand embroidered dresses for small girls.

VITOSHA BLVD & SIDE STREETS: Vitosha Blvd is Sofia's main shopping street and it is probably worth wandering down the area between Patriarch Eftimii Blvd. and the Sheraton Hotel to see for yourself what's on offer. Here you will find the retail outlets of many western brand names.

Rila Style: Continental style women's fashion, Bulgarian produced (with French collaboration). Good quality at very reasonable prices. There's a 'young' Rila Style just a couple of streets further down, on the same side of the road. The clothes are for younger women (teens and 20's) and there are some quite stylish things at exceptionally reasonable prices.

Fan Point : 56 Vitosha Blvd. Vitosha Blvd, close to the corner with Solunska St. Men's and women's casual wear (mostly shirts, t-shirts and blouses) manufactured for famous names, such as Esprit,

George, Mexx. Very affordable.

SLAVEIKOV SQUARE/GRAFIGNATIEV ST.

The Square was tidied up a few years ago but remains famous as the book market. Predominantly Bulgarian books but you will also find books about Bulgaria in English or German, as well as a whole variety of dictionaries and other stationary products. Some stalls still offer computer software and CDs but bear in mind these may well be pirated copies.

Denyl: *Slaveikov Square*. Locally produced men's suits and casual clothing of excellent design and quality.

Not too far from Slaveikov Square is one shop that all image conscious men should visit.

Rollmann: *16a Battenberg St.* High quality men's suits, stitched in Bulgaria using Italian fabric at considerably lower prices than what you would pay in the West. You can also order special made to measure suits.

SHISHMAN ST.

Magazin 10:4 *Shishman St.* One of the longest established shops on this street it has only recently reopened, completely remodeled, (albeit somewhat smaller) but just as 'arty' as ever. An eclectic mix of local fashion, jewelry and ornaments.

Pigas Hats: *19 Shishman St.* An amazing and varied assortment of hats created by Irina Sardareva, from classic to outrageous. There is also a large selection of scarves, many hand painted.

Franca Danila: *19 Shishman St.* Excellent quality Italian women's shoes. They also have a branch on Skobelev Blvd, close to the 'five corners'.

25 Shishman St. This small shop sells shoes and bags made in Bulgaria for the European market. The quality is good and the prices are very reasonable but they carry very low stocks and therefore size availability is limited.

Best: *Slavianska St./ corner Rakovski St.* Hungarian produced women's fashion classical contemporary styles, well-made and also catering to slightly larger sizes than the average shop.



RESTAURANTS

If you'd like to make reservations at a restaurant, just ask for help at the front desk of the Hotel Rodina – they will be happy to help you make your evening plans.

The pricing system is based on a three-course meal with a few drinks:

\$\$\$\$\$: Above 50 Lv. \$\$\$\$\$: up to 50 Lv.
 \$\$\$\$: Up to 35 Lv. \$\$: up to 25 Lv.
 \$: under 15 Lv.

CLASSIC/UPSCALE

Looking for somewhere special? A romantic dinner or somewhere to eat while you're dressed up for the theatre or opera? These should fit the bill.

BEYOND THE ALLEY, BEHIND THE CUPBOARD, \$\$\$

31 Budapest St./Dondukov, t. 983-5581

A perennial favourite, this restaurant is housed in a renovated turn-of-the-century house with a large

garden out front. The garden is as elegant and stylish as the Sezession restaurant, with wide linen canopies and fig trees. Imaginative international cuisine, laid-back service.

BULGARI, \$\$\$

Knyaz Dondukov Blvd, t. 435 -419

Boasting one of the largest gardens in Sofia, Bulgari's menu is made up of almost entirely Bulgarian dishes. Passable service, large portions, wonderful setting.

CARRERA, \$\$\$\$

4 Golo Bardo Sf, (Lozenets) t. 960-2888

Beautiful winter garden setting with wrought iron furniture and pale linen to enhance the mediterranean flavour. Friendly and attentive service.

DA VIDI, \$\$\$\$

36 Angel Kanchev Sf, t. 980-6746

Fantastically trendy, Da Vidi's metal and black minimalist interior is small and frequently full. A one-page menu offers continental cuisine.

GROZD, \$\$\$

21 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd, t. 944-3915,

Smart restaurant with a good view of the Soviet Army monument in the Borissova Gradina park.

KRIM, \$\$\$

17 Slavyanska Sf, t. 981-0666

One of the few restaurants to have survived the arrival of democracy, Krim exudes an air of old-school elegance and service. Krim still fills up with Bulgaria's political and business elite winter and summer alike. A long menu offers Bulgarian, Russian and International cuisine in very large portions.

MANASTIRSKA MAGERNITSA, \$\$\$

67 Han Asparuh St. (Centre)

A 'Hansel and Gretel' garden in front of a fairy tale house, 'The Monastery Kitchen' prides itself on serving old and forgotten Bulgarian dishes that few have had the chance to try.

PANO, \$\$\$

18 Oborishte Sf, Doctor's Garden, t. 468687

Pano offers a few tables on the pavement on Oborishte St, fenced off from passers-by with small cypress trees. Pano's predominantly Mediterranean-

influenced menu and high standards mean it can be difficult to find a table either inside or out.

PETER 1, \$\$\$

5 Positano Sf, t. 980 6577

Lavish decor with candleabras, oil paintings and rich fabrics. Russian folk program, long menu, excellent food.

PANORAMA WINDOW OVER SOFIA, KEMPINSKI HOTEL, \$\$\$\$

loa James Bouchier Blvd. (Lozenets), t. 686 096

Reputedly one of the best restaurants in Sofia, it is also one of the most expensive. You will be paying not only for the high quality of the cuisine but also for one of the best views in the city. International dishes are offered.

PANORAMA BBO GARDENS, RADISSON SAS HOTEL, \$\$\$\$\$

Narodno Subran;e Sq.

At night, the lights from the Parliament building and Alexander Nevski Cathedral provide a great background for a pleasant evening sitting outside, high enough where it's a little cooler and more comfortable. Panorama has a great antipasti buffet filled with a variety of meat and vegetables, but the high point of the menu is the selection of real American steaks. Also offers a cheaper, delicious lunch menu.

PRESLAV, SHERATON SOFIA HOTEL BALKAN, \$\$\$\$\$

5 Sv. Nedelya Sq, t. 981-6541

The original high class restaurant in Sofia, presidents and prime ministers from around the world have dined here. Preslav's cuisine is unrivalled in Sofia, as are its prices.

PRI MIRO, \$\$\$

34 Murphy St., 943-7121; 943-1128

Offering the best Serbian food in Sofia, Pri Miro's back garden is usually full even on a week-night. The long menu offers a comprehensive list of salads, grilled meats and all kinds of Serbian specialties (vegetarians beware, there is little here for you). The lamb grilled on a spit is a particular delicacy and it

is wise to book your (1 kg!) portion in advance as it goes quickly. Service is excellent, and Miro himself usually comes out in his chef's outfit to do the rounds of the tables and make sure everyone is happy.

PRI ORLITE, \$\$\$\$

11 Vassi/ Levski Sf, t. 981-5000

Pri Orlite is 18 floors up in the Ministry of Transport and really does show you the whole of Sofia. The nighttime view is "peerless" and is a must if you are trying to impress a friend. International cuisine dominates the menu. Prices are hefty.

ROTISSERIE NATIONALE, \$\$\$\$

Neafit Rilski St. (off Vitasha Blvd.), t. 980 1717

A unique atmosphere; rustic, but luxurious. Elegant French country cuisine. Attentive, friendly, but sometimes slow service. Live music. Be forewarned that the menu is in Bulgarian and French only.

SEASONS, HILTON HOTEL, \$\$\$\$\$

1 Bulgaria Blvd, t. 933-5000

It's hard to tell you are in the center of Sofia when you sit on the large gem of a terrace that looks out onto the park behind the modern Hilton hotel. Impeccably stylish, the restaurant offers modern, fresh and delicious food, combining flavours from all over the world.

THE HOUSE WITH THE CLOCK, \$\$\$\$

15 Maskavska Sf, t. 987-5656

Undoubtedly one of the best locations in Sofia, with a large leafy garden. Tables are spaced far apart in the garden's lush greenery and are well fitted inside. International cuisine. Both cuisine and service can be mixed.

UNO ENOTECA, \$\$\$\$

45 Vassil Levski Blvd, t. 981-4372

This restaurant is invariably full, so book in advance. Enoteca's garden has a discrete ambience, enhanced by the sound of water trickling through the rocks, Mediterranean influenced cuisine, various grilled fish and barbecued meat. Prides itself on its collection of vintage wines.

UNO'S (BBQ GARDEN), \$\$\$

121 Rakovski St, t. 980-5958

Recently refurbished, this stylish restaurant specializes in Italian cuisine. The open fire adds a warm glow to the cool look. **Soldier-recommended!**

VISHNITE, \$\$\$

45 *Hrista Smirnenski St.*, t. 963-4984

Important to call for reservations as this is a diminutive indoor restaurant, but perfect for an intimate, cozy party. The women running this place are service-oriented and speak English. The menu is creative and consistently good.

VAGABOND, \$\$\$

5 *Svetoslav Terler St.*, t. 9441465

An old house with individual and eccentricly decorated rooms. Lovely summer courtyard. Good food in a friendly atmosphere.

TRENDY

A cup of coffee, a glass of beer or a bite to eat at any time. The places to be seen!

BEFORE & AFTER, \$\$\$

12 *Hristo Belchev St.*, t. 981-6088

All-day diner in a beautifully restored building. The interior is reminiscent of central European cafes - wide and spacious with elegant decor. Short menu with bistro food. Excellent salads. Don't forget to visit the amazing bathroom.

CAPITAL, \$\$\$

Hotel Sheraton

One of the best terraces in town for watching the world go by. Creative menu.

DANI'S, \$\$

18a *Angel Kunchev St.* t. 987-4548

Dani's in the Park, Sofia Business Park

There are meanwhile three individual locations of Dani's each with their own charm. You can choose between giant-sized sandwiches or one of several large and filling salads offered. Ingredients are top quality and the bread is baked on the premises. Also offers homemade lemonade and comfort-food cakes.

LACAPANNINA, \$\$\$

9 *Narodno Subranie Square* t. 980-4431

La Capannina has made the most of the extra-wide pavement on Narodno Subranie Square to bring

the small but stylish restaurant outside. Besides a menu of authentic Italian dishes, you can also find ciabatta sandwiches to take out and the most delicious cakes and biscuits in town.

The view of the parliament building with Alexander Nevsky Cathedral behind it is unbeatable.

There is also la Capaninna Junior near NDK, under 'lover's Bridge', which offers the same good level of cuisine in a slightly more casual environment.

MODERATO, \$\$\$

6 Atanas Dalchev St. t. 970-01-11

Newly opened restaurant and bar. Nice atmosphere, variety of drinks and cocktails, culinary specialities. **Soldier recommended -but must travel by taxi.**

THE LIVING ROOM, \$\$\$

Yanko Sakazov Blvd., Doctor's garden

The latest in a string of dining establishments along the 'multi-functional space' idea to open in Sofia, The Living Room seems to have made a great job of it. Two floors of cafe, sitting room and dining area fill the glass and chrome building with an eclectic mix of furnishings and styles. A short menu offers modern European and Asian cuisine, such as spicy chicken soup or duck breast with orange piquant sauce.

RIO'S, \$\$\$

Bulgaria Sq. t. 9166-777, 952-2198

Self-serve salad bar. Meat based barbecue menu.

Another soldier's favorite!

FOLKLORE/TRADITIONAL

Don't leave Bulgaria without trying some "real" national dishes, drinking a little "rakia" and seeing traditional folk dancing. You will be impressed.

CHEVERMETO, \$\$\$

Hemus hotel, (Cherni Vruh Blvd.)

The only traditional Bulgarian place in town. The clever decor and authentic folkshow takes you into a Bulgarian village. Food is very traditional - fresh salads, meat dishes such as roast lamb and rice, and wonderful desserts.

BOYANSKO HANCHE, \$\$\$*Boyana residential district, t. 563-016*

A very traditional “mexana,” with tasty national dishes, folk dancing, and walking on coal!

VODENITSATA (Waterfall), \$\$\$*Dragalevtsi, next to the chairlift. t. 967-1058*

Attracts big crowds because of its traditional fare and lovely atmosphere.

CHEAP & CHEERFUL

In no way derogatory, these restaurants are a good choice if you are either in search of a quick simple meal or on a tight budget.

DON DOMAT, \$

Corner Rakovski/Slaveikov Sq., t.980-0431,
Corner 6th September/Slavianska St., t.980-4122

Another pizza chain with three outlets in Sofia. Good salads in large glass bowls and fast service. A good place to go with children as there is plenty of space between tables and the staff hand out balloons.

O!SHIPKA, \$*11 Shipka St. t. 844-9288*

Cheap and cheerful pizza place, O!Shipka also offers a range of tasty and imaginative meat and veggie dishes. Full most of the day and evening, it has a great back garden with a kiddies play area in summer.

MAMMA MIA, \$\$*19 Kapitan Andreev St., t. 963-2828*

Popular pizza ria with the local ex-pat community

PICCOLO ITALIA, \$*Corner Yanko Sakazov/Krakra St.*

An authentic Italian-run bistro with self-service food counter. The food offered is fresh, quick and cheap. Excellent coffee and tiramisu.

PIZZA VICTORIA, \$*66 Ivan Assen /I St, t. 943-7543*

Cheap and fast pizza place, with a large and varied menu of alternatives. Friendly and attentive service. Reservations are essential.

SWEET DREAMS, \$

50a Alabin St. (1st Floor)

Recently opened vegetarian food. Clean and bright, relatively smoke free. Friendly service.

THIRSTY DRAGON (JAONA LAMIA), \$\$

50a Alabin St. (1st floor)

Pub style restaurant with good food. The Spanish tortilla comes particularly recommended.

THE WITCHES, \$\$

9 Shipka St.

Formerly a classy Spanish restaurant, the Witches is an attempt at a theme restaurant geared at the lower end of the market with some success as it seems to get *very* busy. Some of the favorites from its Spanish days remain on the menu, such as the paellas. The interior is stylish and the space is broken up into smaller spaces.

UGO, \$

45 Vitosha Blvd, t. 988-1892

A chain of pizza and pasta houses around the city which *is* popular with a young crowd. The salads are served in enormous glass bowls.

MCDONALD'S, \$*All over the city, just follow the Golden Arches.*

Easy to order, the menu is exactly as you know it, except that you can order beer with your meal.

PIZZAHUT, \$

Various locations downtown.

Relatively similar to the Pizza Hut you know, but some of the pizzas are more European (with goat cheese and some interesting toppings). A huge selection of traditional Bulgarian salads.

BARS/CLUBS**BARABAR:** *corner Shipka st./ Assen**Ziatarov*

Friendly new cafe and bar, run by an English girl.

The largest variety of beers and snacks in town.

BITBURGER: *Stefan Karadja St.* German beer and food. Gets the thumbs up from foreigners.

BY THE WAY: 166 *Rakovsky St.*

Cocktails galore in this ultra trendy bar.

BUDDHA BAR: *15a Lege St.*

Open 24 hours a day, this place doubles up as a cafe, restaurant and night club.

FLANNAGAN'S: *Radisson SAS hotel, Narodno Sabranie Sq.*

Irish pub meets city center cafe. Lovely summer terrace with it's great view give this place a more continental cafe feel. Pub food.

GRAMOPHONE: *6 Budapeshta St*

Long and thin, with a long and thin bar. Popular house music. Jazz on Fridays.

IDOLO: *10 Kaloyan St*

Trendy cocktail bar and bistro with metal decor; free internet; juke box

IRISH HARP: *7 Sveta Sofia St.*

Not far from the Hotel Sheraton, this is a genuine Irish place, even if the management is local. Additional dining area (quieter than in the pub) is available downstairs.

JJ MURPHY'S: *7 Karnigradska St*

The city's leading Irish pub has live music at weekends and real imported Irish food items. Bar staff dance on the bar.

JIMMY'S: *various*, Chain serving a variety of coffees, ice creams and sandwiches.

BACKSTAGE: *100 Vassil Levski Blvd.*

This club features live music every night and Wednesdays is blues night.

STATESIDE: *34 Stamboliiski Blvd.*

Run by Americans, this laid-back underground cavern features live music every evening and Tex-Mex food.

SWINGING HALL: *8 Dragan Tsankov Blvd.*

Totally unstylish and yet invariably overcrowded, with a different live band playing in each of the two rooms, this place is cheap and cheerful.

BIBLIOTEKATA: *Oborishte St./Vassil Levski Blvd.* This place has recently undergone total transformation into a suave and sophisticated nightclub. Among tinted glass tables and leather sofas, three girls gyrate on the tables in skimpy outfits. The dance music and DJ attract a rich young crowd.

CACAO: 20-25 *Llaten Rog St. Lozenets*

Ultra-modern decor on 2 levels connected by a half spiral staircase. Throbbing techno music.

CABARET: 12 *Hristo Belchev St*

Stylish and classy nightclub in the same house as Before & After diner.

CASBAH 12-14 *Denkog/u St*

Oriental decor that transports you to Morocco. Large dance floor and charming toilets.

CARAMBA: 4 *Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd*

Latino music and decor with semi--naked waitresses, lots of fun and great for dancing. Features special nights such as 'male striptease'.

COOL HOUSE DALI: 6 *Shipka St.*

Very exclusive nightclub with a long central bar and designer decor. Features live bands and cabarets, a wide selection of food. A strip bar hides in the corner behind tinted glass walls. Mostly latino music but also disco hits.

COOL HOUSE THE PLACE: 1 *Graf Ignatiev St*

A complex of bars, including Dublin and Belfast Irish pubs and two night clubs, Rock Bar and Abato.

ESCAPE: 1 *Angel Kunchev St*

High-tech light displays and sounds; techno beats.

FUNKY TOWN: A happening little bar with American music and black lights. Gets busy early, but worth the stop.

JIM BEAM: 3 *A. Manchev St.*

A crowded little American style club with American style drinks. Locals tend not to like it, but soldiers migrate here.

RISQUE

There are several of these clubs, generally open from 2200-0500 hours. Some of these types of clubs prey on inebriated soldiers, so stay alert. Make sure and pay for your drinks as you go, or the drink prices will likely get higher as you go, leaving you with a shocking bill at the end of the evening.

Ask at the FMPP TOC for an up-to-date list of acceptable establishments if you want to go.



THEATERS/OPERA

Theatre "199"

8, Siavianska Str.

t. 987-85-33

Theatre "Bulgarian Army"

98, Rakovski Str.

t. 987-23-03

National Satiric Theatre "Aleko Konstantinov"

26, Stefan Karadzha Str.

t. 988-10 60

Theatre "Sofia"

23, Yanko Sakazov Blvd.

t. 944-24-85

Theatre "Vazrazdane"

4, Siaveikov Sq.

t. 987-24-31, 9875411

National Musical Theatre

100, Vasil Levski Blvd.

943-1979

Sofia Opera House

1, Vrabcha St.

t. 981-15-49

The Opera is situated in one of the most impressive buildings in Sofia *on the corner of Rakovski Str. and Dondukov Blvd.* Ten columns are lined up along the main facade, above which a rich frieze illustrates the struggle of the Bulgarian nation against fascism. You can buy your tickets at the box office from 0900-1600 daily, except Monday.

HELPFUL BULGARIAN WORDS AND PHRASES

Good morning	Dobro outro
Good day	Dobur den
Good evening	Dobur vecher
Good night	Leka nosht
Good-bye	Dovizhdane
Thank you	Blagodarya or Merci
Excuse me	Izvin ete
Yes	Da
No	Ne
My name is...	Kazvam se...
What is your name?	Imeto Vi, molya?
Do you speak English?	Govorite li angliyski?
How old are you?	Na kolka godini ste?
Are you married?	Omuzhena li ste?
I am American	Az sum smerikanets/
Where's the bathroom?	Kude e banyate?
The check, please	Smetkata, molya
What do I owe you?	Kolko Vi dulzha?
To....(location)	Do....
I'm looking for...	Tursya...
Where can I find...	Kude moga da namerya knigata...
Shoes	obouvki
Underwear	belyo
Pants	pantalon
Shirt	riza
Please let me have...	Molya, edna...
Wine	vino
Beer	bira
Soft drink	bezalkoholni napitki
Fruit juice	plodov sok
Water	voda
One	edin
Two	dve
Three	tri
Four	chetiri
Five	pet
Ten	desset

SOFIA: OPERATION JOINT GUARDIAN

I am a member of the United States military forces deployed to support KFOR in Kosovo. I am currently on an official pass. If I am involved in an emergency situation, or a criminal offense, while on pass. If I am involved in an emergency situation, or a criminal offense, while on pass, you must contact the United States Authorities.



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